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This Newfoundland of Ours.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED BY

THE REV. M. HARVEY,

ON BEHALF OF THE ST. JOHN'S ATHENÆUM,

February 11th, 1878.

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PREFACE.

Regarding the following LECTURE, I have merely to say that it was prepared without any view to publication; and that it is now published in deference to the strongly expressed wishes of many of those who heard it. I have not attempted to revise it; so that it is now printed almost exactly as it was delivered. I have not even eliminated the little pleasantries which were introduced to enliven the spoken address. They can harm no one, and may help to enliven the perusal of the printed page.

It is my most earnest wish that this little production may help some to think more highly and hopefully of "THIS NEWFOUNDLAND OF OURS."

M. H.

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THIS NEWFOUNDLAND OF OURS.

I have undertaken to speak to you, for a little, this evening, regarding "THIS NEWFOUNDLAND OF OURS." The subject, at all events comes home to our own bosoms, and is thoroughly practical in its bearings. The land we live in—with nearly all of us, either the land of our birth or of our adoption—can never cease to be an object of paramount interest. It may not be very lovely or picturesque in its scenery; it may not possess a soil so fertile that it has "only to be tickled to laugh into a harvest;" great prosperity may not have crowned the labours of its people; and their place among the nations may not be very exalted, but still it is *ours*—the spot of earth on which God has placed us and said "go work," and we love it as fondly as if it were a part of classic Greece or Italy, or held within its bosom the vale of Cashmere, "with its roses the brightest that earth ever gave." I can quite understand how many who hear me regard this NEWFOUNDLAND OF OURS with something of the same tenderness that all good children feel towards the mother who bore them, and "looked on their childhood." Here they drew the first breath of life; here, perhaps, "love's young dream" first cast its halos around their youthful imaginations. With its scenes, all that is brightest and best in their lives is entwined. Toils, sorrows, joys, gains, losses—all have endeared to them this spot of earth; and its rugged rocks, to them are encircled with a glory manifold. They have learned to love its very storms and ice-fields, its frost and snows which give vigour to the frame, and send the healthful blood tingling through the veins; and a mystic beauty, born of the best instincts of the heart, spreads over its valleys, and lights up the very waves that leap around their own sea-girt isle. Such a feeling is to be honoured; it is one of the deepest and purest in our nature; and he who has never experienced one throb of love for his country—poor though it may be,—is unworthy of the name of man. It is the same feeling which, in its highest form, has nerved the patriot's arm in freedom's battle.

and struck the loftiest notes from the poet's lyre, and given pathos and power to the orator who has commanded the applause of listening senates, and swayed the hearts of myriads. Why should not the love of country beat as strongly in the heart of a Newfoundlander as in that of an ancient Greek or a modern Briton or American? He too has a country and though he cannot say

"One half its soil has walked the rest
In poets, heroes, martyrs, sages."

Yet it is not unworthy of his love. It may not be able to boast of refinement, wealth and all the culture that wealth brings with it. No ancient institutions, hoary with age, are here; but here is a new land, with a bright and limitless future before it, on whose soil life will take fresh developments, and genius and enterprise new forms, starting with all the experience of the past to guide them, and all the mighty discoveries of modern science at command, and with natural resources which I hope to show you before I have done, are all that could be desired for securing a great and prosperous career.

I think we need not blush to own THIS NEWFOUNDLAND OF OURS. It is a goodly heritage—one we can bequeath, with the confident hope of future greatness, to those who are to come after us. To say nothing of its splendid geographical position, anchored near the shores of the New World, and reaching farther than any other American land towards the Old World, destined thus, as I believe, to furnish the shortest and safest route between both; to say nothing of its being already the great telegraphic station whence stretch the nerves which unite both hemispheres; not to dwell on the command of the Gulf of St. Lawrence which its situation secures, and putting out of view for a little its fisheries, agricultural capabilities and minerals—of all which you will hear presently—look for a moment at its present population as the nucleus from which may be developed an energetic, industrious, intelligent race, with plenty of iron in their blood, and able to shoulder their way in the struggles of the coming time, and bear an honourable part in the physical and intellectual competitions of future years. There is a great deal in race, in ancestry, in good blood. I, for one, believe in the

importance of coming of a good stock. You are the epitome of a long line of ancestry; the concentrated essence of them all; the summing up of whole generations whose labours and moral and intellectual attainments have culminated in you, and made you what you are. Now it seems to me the people of Newfoundland are come of a good stock; and moreover, that the blood has been kept pure, and the race, so far, developed under favourable conditions. We justly boast that this is the most ancient of all the Colonies over which Great Britain sways her sceptre; that this is the first portion of the western world on which the Anglo-Saxon set his foot; that here the nation which was destined to discover the North West Passage, and the sources of the Nile, and to plant American, Indian and Australian empires, first raised its flag and tried its first experiment in colonization. And the first colonists who settled here were not men who were forced to "leave their country for their country's good." Some of them were men born in the heroic days of England, men brave, enterprising, true sea-kings who could fearlessly lay their hand on ocean's mane; many of them Devonshire men, the county that produced Sir Walter Raleigh and his half-brother Sir Humphrey Gilbert, and Drake and Hawkins and many another old English worthy. To this was added, at a later date, some of Ireland's best blood; for the men who were brought out here by Lord Baltimore, Viscount Falkland and Sir David Kirke, from Ireland, were of the right stamp for colonists. I may state that a small dash of Scotch blood was added later still, to "make the mixture slab and good." Thus, on the soil of Newfoundland, the strong enduring Saxon, and the more lively, imaginative, versatile Celt have met, and the result is a wholesome amalgamation of races whence have sprung the stalwart men and comely matrons and maids now around our shores, and there certainly seems to be no fear of the race dying out, judging by the rate at which marryings and givings-in-marriage are going on. The race has taken kindly to the soil and thriven. Breathing an invigorating atmosphere, engaged largely in open air occupations, a hardy energetic race has grown up, in whom the red corpuscles of the blood preponderate, and who are well fitted for the world's rough work. The great naturalist, Agassiz, held that

a fish diet is most favourable for intellectual development,—a theory on which we can perhaps account for the success of Newfoundlanders abroad, in intellectual contests. And when education has done its work, who can tell how many of the descendants of our fishermen, with their strong brains, and iron muscles which will enable them to “toil terribly,” will be found among the successful statesmen, lawyers, preachers, bankers, merchants, engineers and tradesmen, in the great cities of the coming age. The feebler denizens of the smoke-covered city will go down before these fish-eating Newfoundlanders, whose fathers buffeted the billows, and fought the crashing ice-floes, and drank in the health-giving sea breezes. According to Samson’s riddle, “out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.” At all events, we have this advantage over our continental neighbours,—that our isolation has kept the stock pure from undesirable admixtures. We have here the intermingling of *varieties* of race, not of *types*, and that is very important. In the United States we see going on a commingling of types of mankind, of all nationalities, white men, black men, yellow men, red men, producing an amalgam which awakens some anxiety regarding the future of that great country. Here, however, the principle of “natural selection” and the “survival of the fittest” has been operating on a pure race, reared in one of the healthiest climates in the world; and I think that with due culture and the spread of education, a superior specimen of the *genus homo* ought to grow up here. If you tell me that our soil is barren, I reply, even granting that for a moment, which I am prepared to dispute, what is withheld from the land is put into the men. The best races the world has ever seen were those who grew up on a poor and rugged soil, who had to struggle with difficulties, and to whom nature was a stern nurse; but in the struggle, they gained energy, courage, self-reliance, all that constitutes true manhood. Take the noblest nations of the earth, past and present, they were not nurtured amid the flowers of the south, but in the cold and stern north, where they had to smite down the forest, and drain the swamp, and transform, by sweat of brow, the barren wilderness into the waving cornfield. From the hardy, much-enduring race that have

grown up here, fighting cold and hunger often, drawing their scanty subsistence mainly from the boisterous seas around these shores, fearlessly pursuing their avocations amid storms and icefields, will spring a people from which great things may be expected. They have conquered the sea, now they have to conquer the land, and set to work lumbering, grubbing, ploughing, sowing, draining, extracting the precious minerals with which these old rocks are charged,—seaming the country with railroads and common roads, and making smooth the rugged face of nature in an island, one sixth larger than Ireland, and possessing many advantages which are denied to the Green Isle. All that could be asked for, as the elements of national greatness, are here in profusion; and if this country does not rise into prosperity, in coming years, it must be either from the people proving untrue to themselves, or from some combination of unfavourable conditions of which we do not yet see the slightest foreshadowing.

Perhaps you will tell me that I am giving a loose rein to the imagination and indulging in speculations which are

“Such stuff as dreams are made of,

And their little life rounded with sleep”

I do not think so, and I shall presently give you very substantial reasons for all I am advancing; but, in any case, building castles in the air is better than rearing dungeons in the smiling azure overhead. To despair of the land we live in; to think meanly or contemptuously of it; to hold that it is incapable of progress, is, I think, not only unwarranted by facts, but the worst kind of infidelity, leading to stagnation and death. If we may not believe all things about THIS NEWFOUNDLAND OF OURS, we may be permitted at least to hope all things; and let us remember that in matters temporal as well as spiritual, “we are saved by hope.” Possibly I may be a little prejudiced and over-sanguine. Having spent a quarter of a century here—the best working part of my life—I am next door to being a native. I have learned to like this land of fog and codfish, with all its drawbacks. I have grown to love its grim palaeozoic rocks, its storms and its sunshine; its grand battlements that frown defiance at the wild Atlantic; its magnificent bays stretching their arms far inland; its health-giving breezes and its kindly

people. Nay, as years advance, I find a sort of sneaking attachment growing up in my breast towards the very goats that perambulate the streets of the Capital without asking leave, to whom we have generously accorded the "freedom of the city." I notice that, as years roll past, our city goats are becoming more and more literary—devouring whole acres of wall-literature; so that, in the course of time, they may be applying for admission to the membership of the Athenæum, on the ground of their attainments in letters. Byron says "Dear is the helpless creature we defend against the world." For years and years, as most of you know, I have been doing my little best to defend THIS NEWFOUNDLAND OF OURS against a hostile world, and trying to make it known and respected abroad; for as you are all aware we are something worse than unknown, we are mis-known sadly. While engaged in these efforts, possibly I have formed an exaggerated estimate of our country; but if an error, it is on the right side; and I must now go on to give you some reasons for the faith that is in me regarding the future of THIS NEWFOUNDLAND OF OURS.

I have said enough regarding the people, and now I turn to the country itself. Things are on a large scale on this side the Atlantic; and Newfoundland is no exception, being the tenth largest island in the world.† According to an excellent little manual of the Geography of Newfoundland, published lately by Mr. James Howley, Assistant Geological Surveyor, and which every one should possess who wants to know what the country is, THIS NEWFOUNDLAND OF OURS is 317 miles in length, 316 miles in breadth, with an area of 42,000 square miles of land. So far as size goes, therefore, we have a very considerable estate; and, in the long run, size tells immensely, and becomes a measure of political power. Our island is one third larger than New Brunswick; more than twice the size of Nova Scotia; contains 10,000 square miles more than Ireland; 12,000 square miles more than Scotland; is three times as large as Holland, and twice as large as Denmark. As to Prince Edward Island, if it were cut up, we could drown it in three of our largest lakes. Our Grand Lake has an area of 192 square miles; the celebrated lake of Como, in Italy, has only 90 squares miles; and the renowned Killarney only 8

square miles. As far as size goes, Gander Lake, of which we knew nothing almost till our able Geological Surveyor, Mr. Murray, explored it, would make more than five Killarneys, though I fear it will be a good while till it attracts as many visitors as the Kerry lake, haunted by the memories of the lovely Kate Kearney. Gander Lake has an area of 44 square miles, and Red Indian Lake, 69 square miles. In the whole world there is not an equal area of land with such an extent of coast-line as Newfoundland, which, I think, cannot be less than 2,000 miles in length. This is owing to the fact that the shores are indented with so many bays, arms and inlets of the sea, thus furnishing the most splendid facilities for commercial intercourse, and, at the same time, carrying the finny tribes far inland, within reach of the fisherman's hook and net. We have harbours innumerable, many of them ranking among the finest in the world. What a time nature must have taken in chiseling out our magnificent bays, some of them forty and fifty miles in depth, and having scenery which cannot be surpassed; and in scooping out those countless lakes and lakelets which cover about a third of the surface of the island, giving us enough and to spare of water. Vast processes of denudation, as the geologists call it, must have been going on for doubtless ages, shaping our valleys and bays, sculpturing our coast-line, and the contour of our hills and mountain ranges. The final touch was given, no doubt, during the glacial period, when Newfoundland was in the condition in which Greenland now is,—covered with an enormous mass of ice, many thousands of feet in thickness, with huge glaciers at work, grinding its rocks into soil, shaping its river-beds and valleys, tearing down its hills and scattering the fragments far and wide, and scooping out its lakes. Do you ask me how do I know that our island was ever under this mass of thick-ribbed ice? You can see the evidence with your own eyes by taking a walk in any direction into the country and observing the boulders, or big stones, which cover the surface wherever the land has not been cleared—some small, some of great size—but all rent from the parent rock by glacial action, carried considerable distances and flung about in promiscuous confusion. Only those old ice-rivers which we call glaciers, could leave such mementoes

behind them. If you ask me how long this glacial action went on, I refer you to the geologist; but if I might indulge in a guess, I should say perhaps 250,000 years. If you ask again how long is it since the ice disappeared? I reply I don't know, and never hope to know in this life. But this much I do know, that there must have been "hard times" while it lasted—"a good deal of cold out," and fine opportunities for skating. During this "cold snap" of a quarter of a million of years, I rather think there were no Athenæum lectures,—no general elections—no water rates or duns—no Supreme Court or lawyers. Bruis, the great triumph of Newfoundland cookery, had not been discovered, and the game of five-and-forty was still in the womb of time. When nature set her glaciers to work to hurl blocks of stone over the country, she was not thinking of the farmers who would have to clear the ground; but kindly grinding the hard rocks, she gave us splendid materials for road making. We are inclined to think she might have left us a little more of the carboniferous formation, instead of planeing it all away, except the strips on the western shore; for it often yields coal and gives a deep and fertile soil; but then she has "engineered" our noble bays, and brought up the sea to every one's door, and taken great pains with our harbours and coves, and given us codfish and seals and partridges and deer and an unlimited supply of hutz, and 42,000 square miles of land—so that we must not complain. She has, too, thrown in a liberal deposit of Silurian rocks, kindly allowing us an immense share of the Quebec group, containing, I have no doubt, enough copper ore and other minerals to keep us prospecting and mining for centuries to come. Add to all this, our forest and agricultural lands, of which more anon; our encompassing seas with their inexhaustible treasures—these ocean farms of ours requiring no ploughing or sowing, only the reaping;—the materials for shipbuilding which have been prepared—the facilities for the construction of railroads and common roads which nature has furnished in the absence of any lofty range of mountains. Consider all this and say, shall we not pronounce "THIS NEWFOUNDLAND OF OURS" a goodly land—one to be cherished and raised to a high place among the young communities around us, now taking organic form, and as Milton said of England, "like an eagle mewing their mighty youth."

The course of Newfoundland history may be divided into three periods—first the chaotic or anarchic period; second, the transitional, and third the period of maturity. I think we are still in the transitional period, though I trust approaching its last stage; and I doubt not that many whom I now address of the younger generation, will live to see their country come of age and enter on its mature condition. Long and weary was the chaotic period of Newfoundland history, extending from 1583, when Sir Humphrey Gilbert landed at St. John's, and took possession of the country in the name of Queen Elizabeth, to 1728, when the first Governor, Captain Henry Osborne, was appointed, and Newfoundland was raised to the rank of a British colony. I call this long period of 145 years *chaotic* or *anarchic*, because it was marked largely by misrule and oppression among the resident population, and by an unhappy policy on the part of England, which aimed at making the island merely a stage for curing fish, and steadily prohibited the occupation of the country by a settled population. It seems to us, at this distance of time, almost incredible that laws should have been enacted and maintained for more than a century which prohibited the occupation of land, or the erection of houses, except such as were absolutely necessary for carrying on a summer fishery. Ships and fishing crews came out here early in the summer; the fish caught were salted and dried ashore; and when winter approached the fishermen were compelled by law to re-embark for England, carrying with them the products of their labour. The English shipowners and traders wished to retain the harbours and fishing coves for the use of their servants in curing the fish; and they regarded all settlers on the land as interlopers, hostile to their pursuits. Unhappily the British Government of the day fell in with their selfish views; and regarding the Newfoundland fisheries as a nursery for seamen, they secured the enactment of laws prohibiting settlement. Justice was administered by the notable Fishing Admirals, perhaps the most remarkable machinery for administering law adopted in any age or country. It was solemnly enacted that the master of the first ship entering a harbour was to be admiral therein for the fishing season, and be empowered to decide all complaints. We can fancy one of these rough, old skippers,

with a marline-spike in one hand, a pipe in the other, and a bottle of rum at his elbow, presiding in his court of justice. It is not surprising to find, as the result of inquiries afterwards instituted, that the most frightful abuses were perpetrated, and the most tyrannical practices universal under such a system. It speaks volumes, too, for the pluck and energy of the people of those days, that in the teeth of those unjust oppressive laws, a resident population steadily increased, and obtained foot by foot, a firm hold upon the soil, and finally got the obnoxious laws repealed, the Fishing Admirals "sponged off the slate," and secured the administration of justice in regular courts of law. But the battle was long and severe. It was not till 1728 that the first germ of local self-government was obtained by the appointment of a Governor; and it is but eighty-six years since the Supreme Court of Judicature for the island was instituted; and it is but sixty-seven years since the erection of houses, without a special license from the Governor and the cultivation of land were legalised. Only fifty-two years have elapsed since the first roads were laid down. What Newfoundland would be to-day, had settlement been encouraged, and civilization fostered, as in the other provinces, instead of being thwarted and trampled down, it is vain now to conjecture. But let it be remembered that no living man can be held accountable for the wrongs and cruelties of the past; and if I refer to them, it is not to stir up resentments, but to point to them as warning beacons for the future; and as a ground of hope, now that their pressure is removed, for steady progress in the time to come. To me the wonder is that matters are now as favourable as we see them to be. Among those early settlers who fought and won the battle, under such disadvantages, there must have been many good and true men, of great vigour of character, and solid worth. Let us honour the memory of our conscript brothers who for us bore the burden and heat of the day.

Some of the transactions in those anarchic times look to us sufficiently ludicrous, though serious enough to those who went through them. Out of the wreck of the past has been preserved a petition bearing the date of 1776,—or about a century ago—from the "Merchants, Boatkeepers and Princi-

pal Inhabitants of St. John's, Petty Harbour and Torbay," and addressed to "The Hon. the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled." This petition contains some curious items showing how things were looked at in those days. The petitioners prayed for an increase of bounty to the extent of six shillings a ton on all vessels engaged in the fisheries—a very desirable arrangement for them, no doubt. Also they ask for admission of their oil, seal skins and blubber into Britain free of duty—which was only reasonable. Further,—they plead that "if a master or person acting under him should at any time see it necessary to correct any servant under them, with moderation, for not doing his duty in a proper manner," that the said servant be not allowed to summon his master before a justice of the peace, "which in the height of the fishery has been found very detrimental." In other words, these honest men wanted the Commons of England to give them the power of thrashing their servants as they thought proper, without being made answerable in any way. They also asked Parliament to send off all shopkeepers from the country at six months' notice, or else compel them to keep fishing vessels; as they were interfering with their own profits in supplying their own servants. This was rather rough on the shopkeepers of a hundred years ago, and shows that the principle of buying in the cheapest market was not then recognized. The petition winds up by requesting that no more ground be enclosed for farms, as the gardens of the officers stationed here "obstructed the public pathways to the woods." What a curious picture this gives us of the state of matters in St. John's a hundred years ago—merchants and planters cudgelling their servants—charging them what they pleased for supplies, and asking Parliament to remove all shopkeepers. A letter from Governor Milbank, dated October 1790, or 88 years ago, addressed to George Hutchins, Esq., is also extant, in which the Governor orders the house of a certain Alexander Long to be pulled down because "it had a complete chimney in it, *if not two*, and lodging for at least six or eight dieters," and so had been erected contrary to law; and the sturdy old Governor further says that he will not allow possession of any land except such as is employed in the fisheries. But I have still a worse case

to tell you of—a certain Major, Lieut. Governor Elford, about the year 1783, sent a despatch to the British Parliament recommending strongly that “all the women located on the island should be removed, and that in future no women should be allowed to land.” Only fancy our present highly-esteemed and popular Governor, issuing such an inhuman order for the removal of all the ladies in the colony. I am sure he never would do so unless he meant to accompany them. But how came women to be in Newfoundland at all, in such rough times? This is the first mention of them in our history. How did they get here? Blessings on them, they had come to take care of the unfortunate men. “Where the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.” Wherever man is, woman is sure to venture. She knows we require to be looked after, and that alone, man is as useless as one side of a pair of scissors. I feel satisfied that this ill-natured Governor, who must have been an old bachelor, did not succeed in driving out the women, and preventing all new arrivals. I should like to see the Governor or the laws that could accomplish that. As Horace said long ago, if you drive out nature with a fork she will return on you. The tender passion is not to be eliminated from human nature by any forcible measures. The Italians tell a story of a nobleman who grew sick of the world, and especially of the better half of it—woman-kind; and so he retired with his son, then an infant, to a castle in the mountains where no girl or woman was ever allowed to come; and there the child grew up to be a young man without ever having looked into the face of woman. At last his father ventured down with him to a great public festival that was to be held in the valley; and there among other wonders he saw for the first time young girls; and with wide-open eyes he whispered to his father, “What are they?” “They are devils my son,” the father answered, “don’t look at them, or think about them.” He thought, no doubt, he had made all safe. But as they were about to go home he said, “My son what is there in the fair you would like, and I will get it for you?” Now the poor youth had seen a lassie of the hills, with a blush on her cheek like the Alpine rose, and eyes as blue as Italian skies or Juliets dark liquid orbs; and she had shot a glance

at him and wickedly slain him ; and so he said, with a great gulp, " O father, I should like so much to have that young Devil to take home with me." If the story is not true in fact, it is as true as heaven and earth can make it of this human nature of ours. You may be quite sure the women did not leave this island, on the rough hint of the Governor ; and if they had done so, fresh importations would have been soon called for.

Chaos ended, I have said, and Cosmos began in 1728, when our first Governor was appointed, and we were raised to the rank of a colony.—

" The mills of the gods grind slowly
But they grind exceeding small."

'They ground up at last the old Fishing Admirals and their marline-spikes ; and after them the " Surrogates" of blessed memory, and all the stupid selfish laws which prohibited local industry but authorised religious intolerance ; and I think, that these same "mills of the gods" will one day grind up those ancient treaties which have shut us out from the best half of our island, and most seriously impeded the progress of the colony. Still Cosmos came with slow footsteps. In 1805 the country made a big leap forward and got a post office ; and in the same year the *Royal Gazette*, the first newspaper was printed. The transition may be considered to have been fairly established in 1832, when the colony obtained the boon of Representative Government, which in 1855 was followed by Responsible Government, its natural and necessary sequel. Almost every one will now admit that great and beneficial results have followed the introduction of local self-government, which is simply the application of the principles of the British Constitution to the subjects of Queen Victoria in Newfoundland. We are now as free as any people under the sun. I should like to know what greater degree of liberty any man could reasonably ask for than that enjoyed here. We elect our representatives, having a household suffrage ; make our own laws ; select our own Government ; pay them to govern us, and then we have the privilege and happiness of governing them. Think how closely we watch our Government at every turn and abuse them when they go contrary to our wishes. Think of the generous, disinterested,

watchful care of the Opposition to keep them right ; and how our faithful Press pours out the vials of its wrath at times on the devoted heads of the Government, and say are we not sufficiently free ? Even the representative of royalty himself, when he arrives here, finds himself, a very limited monarch indeed. With Responsible Government then our transition was fully inaugurated, and we are jogging on now fairly towards the stage of our maturity, as an organized and civilized community.

Do you ask me when the period of our maturity will begin ? I answer, without hesitation, when our island is pierced by a grand trunk railway, with branches radiating to all the principal districts—then and not till then, will our majority have arrived. Permit me for a moment to state my honest convictions on this subject. Right or wrong, you will I hope give me credit for sincerity, for I have no “axe to grind,” and I am uninfluenced by any political bias. And my conviction is this—that Newfoundland has reached that stage in which a railroad has become an absolute necessity, if she is to make further progress ; and that we ought to strain every nerve, and submit to almost any sacrifice in order to obtain this grand necessity of modern civilization. We have all that could be wished for, at present, as regards ocean and local steam communication. We have the splendid steamers of the Allan Line calling here weekly ; and they have given to the world a practical demonstration of the magnificence of our geographical position. In ten minutes after leaving the broad Atlantic they are moored at the wharf, in one of the safest harbors in the world. Their prows are turned eastward, and ten minutes after clearing the wharf they are again in the Atlantic, with not a rock or shoal between them and Queenstown, which they reach in six days almost as regularly as a railway train. People understand now the superiority and safety of this route, and are getting to have faith in St. John's, as a port of arrival and departure. Now suppose we had a railway built, and could whisk passengers across the island to St. George's Bay in nine hours, and put them across the Gulf in fifteen more, and that then they could take rail for all parts of the Continent, do you not think we should have the bulk of passengers who cross the

Atlantic taking this swift route, and that we should have the greater part of the mails transmitted by the same track, when London would thus be brought within seven days of New York. This is no dream. One of the most eminent of living engineers—Mr. Sandford Fleming—has pronounced it quite a practicable achievement thus to establish communication between the two hemispheres. When we can furnish at once the safest and quickest route between the Old and New Worlds, our claims are sure one day to be recognized. But setting this aside for a moment, let us look at our internal condition, as suggesting the necessity for a railroad. What are we going to do with this huge territory of 42,000 square miles? Are we going to leave the interior for ever to the wolves and the deer? Are the fine agricultural districts to remain solitudes, when our own people and the people of other countries, who are in need of bread, would occupy them if they were made accessible, and transform them into smiling farms, and make them the happy homes of men? Must our noble forests be left to rot and burn?—our coal beds and mineral deposits sleep for ever where bountiful nature has stored them? Shall our people cling for ever to the rocky shores, and content themselves with a precarious subsistence derived from the stormy deep? Shame on us if we do not rise to a nobler conception of our destiny as a people, and utilize the gifts of a bountiful Providence. To me it seems that the present generation are brought face to face with the task of constructing a railroad across the island, and that they will prove untrue to their duty if they do not lay aside all party considerations and unitedly and valiantly gird themselves for the work. Think for a moment what the construction of such a railroad means to us! It means the opening up of this great island—the union of its eastern and western shores—the working of its lands, forests and minerals—its connection by a rapid means of communication with the neighbouring continent. It means the increase of its population by a stream of immigration—it means the conversion of the country into a hive of industry, and the commencement of a material prosperity to which we can set no limits. It means employment at good wages to our population—many of whom alas! are now very scantily supplied with the poorest necessities of

life—"Too little to live on and too much to die on." To St. John's itself a railroad means a vast increase of business of all kinds,—new houses going up—steamers arriving and departing every day—real estate increased in value fourfold; and an end to all grumbling among our traders about bad debts and heavy stocks on hand at the close of the season. It means openings of all kinds for the talents and energy of the young generation. But wanting a railroad, none of these benefits will come, and we shall be simply at a stand-still and all our resources must remain undeveloped.

But then it is asked how is a poor colony like this to build a railroad? We can't afford it. I reply you can't afford to do without it. Your poverty is your strongest argument for going at it, in order to transform that poverty into wealth. It seems to me that a railroad is perfectly within our reach by a very little sacrifice. The first step has been taken by securing a survey of the line; and, in my humble judgment, never was public money better spent than in that instance, for it has lodged the idea of a railroad in the public mind, and that will not be eradicated till it is translated into a fact. Moreover—it has shown that there are no serious difficulties in the construction of such a road. This is one of the easiest countries in the world to pierce with a railroad. I have high authority for saying that a subsidy of £30,000 per annum, for a limited number of years, with a liberal grant of unoccupied land along the line, would secure this grand desideratum. What is wanted is that the people should arouse themselves to the necessity of getting a railroad, and tell their representatives that it must be done; and that if there are difficulties, they are sent to the halls of legislation to overcome difficulties, and lead the way in the path of progress. If I were Prime Minister I should, in Yankee phrase, "freeze to" this railroad. I would plot and scheme and scrape and pare, and revise the tariff, and do everything short of stealing, till I got money enough for the railroad. I think I would take that million or million and a quarter of dollars which we have had the good fortune to obtain by the award of the Fishery Commission—thanks to the goodness of our case, and the ability and zeal of our representative, Mr. Whiteway;—and I would permanently invest it, and thus obtain £10,000 per annum, or

a third of all that is wanted for our railroad. I would keep at it, sledge-hammering, knocking down all opponents, confident that I should win, in the long run, and that a grateful posterity would one day bless my memory, and that my statue would stand over the great International Railway Station that shall yet adorn St. John's. Once it is built, all things are possible. Hail to the great Hereafter, when Newfoundlanders will be making excursions by rail, on their public holidays, to witness a regatta on Gander Lake, or Red Indian Lake; when pic-nics will be held at Serpentine Mountains or Powder-horn Hill, and dances at the foot of the Blow-me-down Range; when Sunday school children will be taken in happy batches in excursion trains, to gather hutz and play games on the tableland of the interior; when day schools will be whisked off to spend a charming day in visiting the mines and great-copper smelting works of the north, or in wandering along the banks of the Humber—when visitors from the United States and Canada will be crowding the Imperial Hotel at Long Pond, where cold and hot salt water baths can then be had and excellent livery stables are kept; and when return tickets for Japan and China, *via* the Canadian Pacific Railway will be issued at a cheap rate; and such will be the facilities for travelling that we shall seldom live at home. Don't tell me that, with all these glowing prospects before us, we cannot afford to build a railway. With an annual revenue of \$883,000 and yet not able to construct 850 miles of railway! Then might we ask

"Is our civilization a failure,
Or is the Caucasian played out?"

Let us abjure such faithless ideas.

"Lay down your rails, ye nations, near and far,—
Yoke your full trains to steam's triumphal car;
Link town to town; unite in iron bands
The long-estranged and oft-embattled lands.
Peace, mild-eyed Seraph—knowledge, light divine,
Shall send their messengers by every line.
Blessings on science and her hand-maid steam!
They make Utopia only half a dream;
And show the fervent, of capacious souls,
Who watch the ball of Progress as it rolls,
That all as yet completed or begun,
Is but the dawning that precedes the sun."

I must now draw this rather lengthy address to a close ; and I shall do so by endeavoring to show you that this country has made such real and, I might say, wonderful progress during the last forty or fifty years, and more especially during the last fifteen or twenty years, that we are warranted in predicting great things of it in the near future. I begin with its progress in road-making which has been very considerable, though much remains to be done. Roads are types of civilization. Where there are no roads the people are savages ; where roads are few and bad, law is weak and society semi-barbarous. If you want to know whether a people is stagnant or progressive look at their roads. Wherever there is mental activity, enterprise and a liberalizing spirit of any kind you will see their manifestations in the building of roads for travel and intercourse. All the great epochs of civilization in the world's history were ages of roads. Nothing marked the splendid ~~era~~ of the Roman Empire so strikingly as the magnificent system of roads which radiated from the forum of Rome to the furthest extremities of the most distant provinces. This is emphatically the age of roads, not only of stone but of iron, along which rushes the iron horse, with heart of fire and muscles of steel and breath of steam. Then we make roads over the ocean by our steamship ; and roads for thought by the telegraph wire ; and the day is not distant when the world will be one vast sensorium, with nerves of communication to the very ends of the earth. In the Highlands of Scotland, in what was once a very wild district, but which is now well furnished with excellent roads, there stands a stone bearing this inscription, which reads rather like an Irish bull but is really a Highland one :—

“ If you had seen these roads before they were made,
You would lift up your hands and bless General Wade.”

Now in like manner I might say if you had seen the excellent roads that now radiate from St. John's “ before they were made,” you would bless, first of all, the memory of Sir Thomas Cochrane, one of our Governors, who in 1825 made the first road to Portugal Cove, and also the road between Harbour Grace and Carbonear. Like our present Governor, he was not afraid of the bogs and bushes, and travelled far and wide to inform himself regarding the country and people. He

initiated road-making, and others have followed it up. Still the labour of road building went on slowly. When Mr. Jukes, the geologist, was here in 1840, he tells us that when making an excursion to Topsail, he found the first five miles of the road from St. John's "in a condition good enough for a horse to trot along it"; the rest was merely marked out, not gravelled, and cut through woods "leaving the stumps and roots of the trees." When this was the case around the Capital so lately as 37 years ago, it may be imagined what was the condition of the rest of the country in regard to roads. You will agree with me then that, during those 37 years, great progress has been made in road-building; but still an enormous amount of work remains to be done before our population shall be provided as they ought, with roads—the indispensable elements of civilized existence. At the present date we can reckon up 727 miles of postal roads—1,730 miles of district roads. The Great Northern Mail Route when completed will be 137 miles in length and 1,200 miles are in process of making.

I must now very rapidly sum up other indications of progress. In 1840 the first steamer ever seen in Newfoundland made her appearance; in 1840, or 38 years ago, we got our first mail steamer; a small one that ran to Halifax. Now what a contrast! We have ocean steamers calling weekly; we have three local steamers; and a fleet of some 26 steamers will be starting next month from our harbours for the icefields. We are now able to spend \$121,420 per annum on steam communication. I call that genuine progress; and it is the work of the last few years. It is an unmistakable index of the growing wealth, enterprise and intelligence of the colony. Some dozen years ago it was whispered that copper ore had been found in the north of the island, but hardly any one gave any attention to the rumour or expected anything out of it. Now what is the state of the case? From Betts Cove Mine alone 45,000 tons of ore were shipped last year, requiring a small fleet for its conveyance; and 1,200 men found remunerative employment in that single mine. It is well known that Tilt Cove is no less valuable. The whole region around these mines is covered with mining licenses; speculation is rife and new deposits of ore are con-

tinually discovered. The geological map of Newfoundland shews that the Serpentine rocks, with which the ore is associated, have a spread of 5,000 square miles—enough to furnish scope for any amount of mining enterprise in the future. It is now put beyond a doubt that our island is destined to become one of the world's great mining regions. Here then is another great stride in advance. Mining means employment for our people,—the improvement of our revenue—the extension of our trade and the increase of our population. Even in agriculture we are advancing. The Solicitor General told us last year that the annual value of our agricultural produce is at present over \$612,000. Mr. Murray has calculated that there are nearly three millions of acres of land suitable for settlement on our eastern and western shores, all at present unoccupied. When with such slight efforts now put forth in the cultivation of the soil we raise produce valued at £153,000 per annum our whole population being only 161,000 what may we not anticipate when our present antiquated laws which impede settlement are repealed, the country thrown open to enterprise in lumbering and farming; the districts surveyed and made accessible; information regarding their soil, climate and capabilities widely circulated, and means taken to attract emigrants to our shores, as is the case in all the other provinces!

A word or two now about our fisheries. Fears are entertained by many that they are failing and may become exhausted. Believe me such fears are utterly unfounded. Of course they are now, as they have always been, subject to considerable fluctuations; and as we all know last year's results were unfavourable. But so long as the great Arctic Current, laden with the germs of fish life and furnishing the true home for the Commercial fishes, continues to wash our shores, no one need dread an exhaustion of our fisheries. Their increase in value has been steady up to the present hour, and with the aid of science they are capable of indefinite expansion. Within a dozen years the value of codfish, our grand staple has doubled. Where is the country in the world of whose staple production a similar tale could be told! The more railways are extended in those countries which consume our fish,—such as Spain, Portugal, Italy and

Brazil—the greater the demand for our codfish. Risks in its shipments are now immensely less than in former years, partly owing to the state of all markets being made known by telegraph, and partly to increased facilities for its transportation inland by railways; so that I am told it is here becoming more and more a “cash article,” like the flour of Canada and the United States. It is a mistake to suppose there has been any falling off in the quantity of codfish exported during the last 57 years. In the year 1849, 1,175,167 quintals of cod fish were exported; in 1874, 1,609,724; in 1875, 1,186,235; in 1876, 1,364,068 quintals. In the five years ending in 1856 the average annual value of the products of our fisheries was \$5,166,129; during the five years ending 1876 the annual value rose to \$7,847,661—being an increase of \$2,681,532, since 1856, in the annual value of our fish products. Such a result ought to quiet all our fears. What we want now is to call in the aid of science, and secure the services of an able practical and scientific man to act as Fishery Commissioner. We have the most valuable fisheries in the world, but unlike all other countries, we have no one specially charged with watching over their interests.

Did time permit I could show you that the table of our exports and imports, the deposits in our Savings Bank now reaching above a million dollars—and in our other Banks whose shareholders are in “pastures green”—and the healthy state of our trade while most other countries have been suffering from depression,—that all these further indicate steady progress, and give promise of a prosperous future for THIS NEWFOUNDLAND OF OURS. But I must now close. I trust my subject will be to some extent an apology for the unwarrantable length of this address. If I have detained you too long, you can console yourselves with the thought that you have been suffering for your country. I respectfully submit that I have made out my case and adduced sufficient evidence to prove that the land we live in is not exactly, as many believe, a stranded iceberg, but one that has all the elements of prosperity in itself, and a great future before it. I have proved, I flatter myself, that since unjust and oppressive legislation ceased and it obtained a fair chance, it has made rapid progress and is likely, ere long, to overtake its

sister provinces which got a start of it in the race. Nor is our progress merely material—it is also social and moral. During my residence here of twenty-five years I have observed a very great amelioration in many directions. The asperities of political and religious conflicts are greatly softened. Though there is still room for a little improvement, the political warfare is now carried in better taste, with more moderation and greater regard for the amenities of life. We have learned that our opponents are not necessarily fiends, knaves, or jack-asses, and that it is hardly polite to say so. I think that even the *odium theologicum* is greatly toned down. The patriotic spirit is rising gradually above party strife and denominational zeal. This is what we require to cultivate and extend, especially among our young men, on whom the future of the country depends—that patriotism which so respects and loves the country as to be willing to make all sacrifices for the promotion of its highest and best interests, and which will regard any trust which the country commits to their keeping as among the most sacred of human pledges—that enlightened patriotism which recognizes that the true greatness and happiness of our country consists not in mere material prosperity, but in the education, the intelligence, the virtue and the religion of its people. Let us each try to do our part bravely and faithfully to leave the country better than we have found it. And let our watchword be “Forward.”—

“ Standing still is childish folly,
 Going backward is a crime :
 None should patiently endure
 Any ill that he can cure.
 Onward ! Keep the march of time—
 Onward ! while a wrong remains
 To be conquered by the right ;
 While oppression lifts a finger
 To affront us by his might ;
 While an error clouds the reason
 Of the universal heart,
 Or a slave awaits his freedom,
 Action is the wise man's part

“ Lo ! the world is rich in blessings—
 Earth and ocean, flame and wind

Have unnumbered secrets still,
To be ransacked when you will,
For the service of mankind ;
Science is a child as yet
And her power and scope shall grow,
And her triumphs in the future
Shall diminish toil and woe ;
Shall extend the bounds of pleasure,
With an ever-widening ken,
And of woods and wildernesses
Make the happy homes of men."



APPENDIX.

—10:—

No. I.

In support of the statement that our fisheries are not deteriorating, the following extract from Professor Hind's Report on the Effect of the Treaty of Washington on our Fisheries carries with it great weight :

"About forty years ago, the Bank Fishery, so far as regards Newfoundland, entirely ceased, and the fishery has since been carried on altogether within shore, and is extending, year by year, further and further up Labrador. As far as my observation goes, and as far as statistics go, I am able to show that the increase, during the last sixty or seventy years, since for instance 1804, has been almost perfectly uniform, when you take into account the increase in the population of the country. Of course it is to a certain extent dependent on upon that, and subject also to those fluctuations which continually take place in our fisheries—in the mackerel and cod fisheries—and in the marine climate on the American coasts. Also in the herring fishery the increase has been continuous since 1850, since when there has always been a mean of one million quintals. It reached one million quintals in 1842, and after that it either approached to or rose above it continually."

The following is a table showing the exports of cod fish from Newfoundland since 1867 :—

	Quintals.
1867	1,066,215
1868	1,169,948
1869	1,204,086
1870	1,213,737
1871	1,328,726
1872	1,221,157
1873	1,369,205
1874	1,609,724
1875	1,136,235
1876	1,364,068

The following Table from the same Report, shows the gradual progress of the value of the products of the Newfoundland fisheries, during each group of five years, from 1852 to 1876, inclusive :—

Average Value of Exports—Group of five years—

1852 to 1856	. . . .	\$5,166,129
1857 to 1862	. . . .	6,132,392
1862 to 1866	. . . .	6,080,445
1867 to 1871	. . . .	7,011,407
1872 to 1876	. . . .	7,847,661

The way in which the Arctic current which sweeps along our shores, sustains our fisheries will appear from the following extracts from Professor Hind's Report :—

“ It is a popular error that the cold of the Arctic seas is unfavourable to fish life. In truth the Arctic seas and the great currents flowing from them are in many places a living mass, a vast ocean of living slime, and the all-pervading life which exists there affords the true solution of the problem which has so often presented itself—where the food comes from which gives sustenance to the countless millions of fish which swarm on the Labrador, on the coast of Newfoundland and in Dominion and United States waters, or wherever the Arctic current exerts an active influence.” “ This “slime” of the ocean appears to live most abundantly in the coldest water and in the neighbourhood of ice. The great ice-drift coming from the Spitsbergen seas, sweeping round Cape Farewell, then North-westerly by Davis' Straits, is augmented by immense bergs and floes from Baffin's Bay and Hudson's Straits, and at length, on the banks of Labrador, countless thousands of these ground, bringing with them their “slime.” Thus the slime which accompanies the ice-bergs and ice-floes of the Arctic current, accumulates on the banks of Northern Labrador, and renders the existence possible there of all those forms of marine life—from the diatom to the minute crustacean—from the minute crustacean to the crab and prawn, together with mullusous animals and starfish in vast profusion, which contribute to the support of vast schools of cod, which also find their home there.”

No. II.

Evidences of the progress of the Colony are supplied from the advance in the Exports and Imports, the Deposits in the Savings' Bank and private Banks, and from the Revenue— In 1866 the value of the Exports was \$3,694,305 ; in 1876, \$8,163,340. In 1866 the value of Imports was \$5,784,849 ; in 1876, \$7,205,907. At the close of 1876 the deposits in the Savings' Bank amounted to \$1,011,800. It is understood that our two private banks have very large sums, as deposits, at the same rate of interest as that of the Savings' Bank: The Revenue in 1866 was \$721,390 ; in 1877, \$833,068 The public debt of the Colony in 1876 was \$1,319,340. In 1785 the population of Newfoundland was 10,244 ; in 1857 it had risen to 122,638 ; in 1869, to 146,536 ; and in 1874 to 161,374. In 1869 the total number of boats employed in the shore fishery was 14,765 ; in 1874 they had increased to 18,611. In 1869, the number of persons engaged in catching and curing fish was 37,259 ; In 1874, 45,854 persons were so employed. In 1874, the number of vessels, including sealers was 1,197 with a tonnage of 61,551 tons, manned by 81,394 fishermen sailors.

